



VIRGINIA ENVIRONMENTAL ASSEMBLY

...

SEPTEMBER 7 – 8, 2018
WILLIAMSBURG, VA

Welcome!

Bringing together conservation leaders from across Virginia, the Environmental Assembly provides a forum for discussion on key environmental issues and an opportunity to strategize with like-minded individuals about the best ways to tackle threats to our natural environment.

The Virginia Environmental Assembly is organized by Virginia Conservation Network (VCN), this year in partnership with William & Mary Sustainability.

Founded as the Conservation Council of Virginia in 1969, Virginia Conservation Network (VCN) began as a roundtable of major conservation groups and has grown to include over 100 Network Partners across the Commonwealth. VCN is committed to building a powerful, diverse, and highly-coordinated conservation movement focused on protecting our Commonwealth's natural resources today and for tomorrow.

VCN is a facilitator of strategic action, a resource for Network Partners statewide, and a constant conservation presence in Virginia's Capitol. Playing a unique role in Virginia's conservation community, VCN helps the community speak with one coordinated voice. The organization and its staff focus on strengthening the conservation community as a whole and winning environmental victories that benefit all Virginians.

VCN's Network Partners work on a wide range of issues from stream restoration to transportation reform to renewable energy advancement to promoting sustainable community growth and more. Given the diverse work of our Partners, VCN organizes its programs into three main categories: Healthy Rivers, Clean Energy, and Green Communities.



EVENT SPONSORS

Virginia Conservation Network strives to make the Environmental Assembly accessible to all who wish to attend by keeping ticket prices low. To achieve this, the organization relies on the generous support from event sponsors. A special thank you goes to our event partner, William & Mary Sustainability; and our event sponsors, National Wildlife Federation, Amalgamated Bank, and Foundation Earth.

W&M SUSTAINABILITY



EVENT LOCATION

Virginia Environmental Assembly
Friday, September 7 – Saturday, September 8, 2018
William & Mary School of Education:
301 Monticello Ave, Williamsburg, VA 23185

UPCOMING EVENTS

General Assembly Preview | December 1, 2018 | held locally

In preparation for the 2019 General Assembly session, VCN and its Network Partners convene for a day long Preview of what's in store for conservation. Volunteers, board members, and the staff of Network Partners discuss priority conservation topics and our approach to advancing policy in the legislative session.

Conservation Lobby Day | January 30, 2019 | Richmond, VA

VCN organizes Conservation Lobby Day to ensure a strong conservation voice is heard early in the legislative session. Volunteer advocates are invited to join professional staff of our Network Partners as we meet with state legislators and encourage them to support environmental policy advancements.

SCHEDULE

●●● Friday, September 7, 2018 ●●●

VCN Annual Meeting open to Network Partners
William & Mary School of Education

8:00 – 8:30 a.m. | Sign-in + Coffee — Matoka Room

8:30 – 9:00 a.m. | Welcome — Matoka Room

9:00 – 10:00 a.m. | 2018 Workgroup Year in Review — Matoka Room

VCN workgroups will give a quick report out on their top priority campaigns, focusing on the most significant highlights from the year and where each campaign is headed in 2019.

10:00 – 10:15 a.m. | VCN Update and Board Vote — Matoka Room

10:30 – 11:45 p.m. | Breakout Meetings by Organizational Role

Breakouts include: Executive Directors (Board Room), Legislative Staff (Holly Room), Communications (outside), and Grassroots / All (Matoka Room)

12:00 – 1:10 p.m. | Lunch + Breakout Discussions

Breakout #1: Improving Habitat Connectivity in Virginia — Matoka Room

Join a roundtable discussion with Virginia agencies to consider options that improve public safety, reduce animal / vehicle collisions, and directly support Virginia's State Wildlife Action Plan. After the discussion Network Partners will separately discuss opportunities for public policy to encourage increased wildlife corridors.

- Chris Burkett — Wildlife Action Plan Coordinator, Department of Game and Inland Fisheries
- Bridget Donaldson — Associate Principal Research Scientist, Virginia Transportation Research Council
- Joe Weber — Natural Heritage Information Manager, Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation
- Misty Boos — Director, Wild Virginia
- Susan Holmes — Policy Director, Wildlands Network

Breakout #2: Intersection between Environmental Justice and DEI Work — Holly Room

Environmental justice is a broad term that looks different in each community and encompasses work throughout many fields; therefore, collaboration across movements and issues is invaluable. During this session, we will discuss the nature of collaboration in Virginia's environmental justice work and how it relates to the ongoing effort to implement diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives. We will also discuss how each individual can contribute to environmental justice by better understanding their own background and viewpoints.

- Claire Luce, M.S.W. — Doctoral Student in Social Work, Virginia Commonwealth University

Breakout #3: Addressing Transportation Emissions — Board Room

Transportation is the leading source of carbon emission in Virginia. Join an informal conversation with Network Partners and Department of Environmental Quality Deputy Director Chris Bast to discuss opportunities in Virginia to reduce emissions from the transportation sector.

Breakout #4: Environmental Career/Internship Panel — Dogwood Room

William & Mary students are invited to join conservation leaders for an engaging discussion about what it takes to land a job in the environmental field.

- Sarah Francisco — Virginia Director, Southern Environmental Law Center
- Stephanie Pruffer — Organizer, Green Corps
- Samantha Lockhart — National Campaigns Manager, National Wildlife Federation
- Georgia Busch — Manager of Environmental & Outdoor Education, Maymont

1:45 – 2:15 p.m. | Bus Pick-Up for Field Trips — pick-up points detailed below

All field trips have bus transportation. The first pick-up point is the William & Mary School of Education at 1:45 p.m. The buses will then pick up attendees at the Hilton Garden Inn (1:55 p.m.), the Country Inn and Suites (2:05 p.m.), and the Hampton Inn and Suites (2:15 p.m.). If you are staying at a hotel, we recommend you check in between lunch and the bus pick-up for field trips.

Field Trip #1: Canoe Trip on Powhatan Creek — BLUE BUS

Questions? Contact Kyle at 434-390-5588. If you are not taking the bus, meet at Billsburg Brewery (2054 Jamestown Road) at 2:30 p.m.

Join the James River Association on a canoe trip on the scenic Powhatan Creek, a tributary of the James River. We will focus on the history and ecology of the human relationship with the James River. **Coordinated by James River Association.**

Field Trip #2: Sustainable Winery Tour at Williamsburg Winery — BLUE BUS

Questions? Contact Kristie at 804-420-8288. If you are not taking the bus, meet at Williamsburg Winery (5800 Wessex Hundred) at 2:45 p.m.

Recently awarded Green Winery of the Year by the Virginia Green Travel Alliance, Williamsburg Winery has established their commitment to sustainable practices through many avenues. Join Patrick Duffeler — Founder and Chairman of Williamsburg Winery and Board Member of the Historic Virginia Land Conservancy — for an exclusive tour covering soil improvements, organic winemaking, reduction of chemical use in the vineyard, and the human benefit of forestry. The tour of the property will be followed by a wine tasting in the cellar. **Coordinated by Williamsburg Winery.**

Field Trip #3: Historic Jamestowne Walking Tour — GREEN BUS

Questions? Contact Mary at 804-614-7670. If you are not taking the bus, meet at Historic Jamestowne (1368 Colonial Parkway) at 2:30 p.m.

Explore Historic Jamestowne and learn about the latest archaeological discoveries that are shedding new information about the origins of our nation. This 90-minute walking tour will share the latest information about the excavations at the Church site where the first legislative assembly met in 1619 and the Angela site home to the first known enslaved African woman at Jamestown. After the tour, you may explore the 1607 James Fort site and exhibit facilities. **Coordinated by Preservation Virginia.**

Field Trip #4: William & Mary Campus Sustainability Walking Tour — RED BUS

Questions? Contact Mary at 804-614-7670. All participants must take the bus for this tour.

Join W&M Sustainability on a walk of the William & Mary campus! Stroll the brick paths while learning about our stormwater practices, visit the hydroponic wall in Commons Dining Hall, and tour the ISC Greenhouse. **Coordinated by W&M Sustainability.**

Field Trip #5: Tour of Local Stormwater and Agricultural Best Management Practices — GREEN BUS

Questions? Contact Pat at 434-484-0804. All participants must take the bus for this tour.

James City County is home to many best management practices that keep nutrient and sediment pollution out of our waterways. On this bus/walking tour, you'll see living shorelines that protect the James River. You'll walk a farm that uses cover crops, buffers, and no-tillage to improve soil health and reduce runoff. You'll also see a resident's use of the Virginia Conservation Assistance Program to install permeable pavers and a rain garden on his property. **Coordinated by Chesapeake Bay Foundation.**

4:45 p.m. | Bus Pickup for Conservation Reception — meet at front entrance of William & Mary School of Education

Everyone attending the Conservation Reception who did not participate in the field trips should meet at the front entrance of the School of Education at 4:45 p.m. to catch the bus to the reception.

5:30 – 8:00 p.m. | Conservation Reception — Billsburg Brewery (2054 Jamestown Road, Williamsburg, VA 23185)

We welcome you to join Virginia's conservation community for a special reception to celebrate the successes we've achieved this year over beer, wine, and hors d'oeuvres. The Conservation Reception is being held at Billsburg Brewery and gives conference attendees the opportunity to network with fellow conservationists in a casual, outdoor environment.

7:30 + 8:00 p.m. | Post-Reception Bus Schedule — buses leaving at 7:30 and 8:00 p.m.

Stop #1: Williamsburg's Historic Downtown

There are a number of excellent restaurants and bars in Williamsburg's historic downtown area. We recommend the following establishments: DoG Street Pub, Hound's Tale, and Blue Talon.



Happening at stop #1: Choose Clean Water Coalition Member Gathering

Address: 525 Prince George St, Williamsburg, VA 23185

The Choose Clean Water Coalition invites its members to Amber Ox Public House for a casual gathering following the Conservation Reception. The Coalition will cover appetizers and the first round of drinks. Additional drinks and dinner will be available for purchase.

Stop #2: William & Mary School of Education

You are allowed to leave your vehicle at the School of Education overnight. This stop is intended for anyone who wishes to retrieve his/her vehicle and has not been drinking. Please do not drink and drive!

Stop #3: Hilton Garden Inn

Address: 1624 Richmond Rd, Williamsburg, VA 23185

Stop #4: Country Inn and Suites

Address: 400 Bypass Rd, Williamsburg, VA 23185

Stop #5: Hampton Inn and Suites

Address: 718 Bypass Rd, Williamsburg, VA 23185

••• Saturday, September 8, 2018 •••

Programming open to the public
William & Mary School of Education

8:00 – 8:30 a.m. | Sign-in / Light Breakfast & Coffee — Matoka Room

8:30 – 8:45 a.m. | Welcome

Led by Henry Broaddus, VCN Board Member and Vice President for Strategic Initiatives & Public Affairs for William & Mary

9:00 – 10:15 a.m. | Case Study: Chesapeake Bay Cleanup in Surrounding Localities — Matoka Room

CHOOSE ONE

Virginia has entered Phase III of the multi-state Chesapeake Bay cleanup plan. Properly referred to as the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Implementation Plan, this initiative has benefited localities tremendously, from cleaning up local waterways to improving the health of the largest estuary in the United States. During this session, panelists will discuss specific projects and programs that Williamsburg and its surrounding areas have used to reduce pollution running into the James River. Panelists include:

- Jay Ford — Virginia Voices Outreach Coordinator, Chesapeake Bay Foundation (Moderator)
- Ann Jennings — Deputy Secretary of Natural Resources for the Chesapeake Bay
- Fran Geissler — Stormwater Director, James City County
- Joe Battiata — Stormwater Manager, City of Hopewell
- Jim Wallace — Director, Colonial Soil & Water Conservation District

9:00 – 10:15 a.m. | Discussion: Environmental Justice in Virginia — Dogwood Room

The development of the Environmental Justice collaborative and the creation of the Advisory Council on Environmental Justice have formalized Virginia's environmental justice work; however, these efforts are often seen as separate from the other environmental initiatives happening across the state. This discussion will focus on the importance of collaboration within environmental justice work, illuminating the work of organizations that are committed to environmental justice initiatives while also exploring how every organization can integrate environmental justice into the work they are already doing. Speakers include:

- Chante Coleman — Director, Choose Clean Water Coalition (Moderator)
- Zakia Shabazz — Coordinator, Virginia Environmental Justice Collaborative
- Kate Boyle — Deputy Executive Director, Appalachian Voices
- Gustavo Angeles — Environmental Justice Program Coordinator, Sierra Club Virginia Chapter
- Dr. Mary Finley-Brook — Associate Professor of Geography and the Environment, University of Richmond

10:25 – 11:40 a.m. | Panel: Investing Money into Regional Climate Programs — Matoka Room

CHOOSE ONE

Virginia is in the process of finalizing its state-level climate action plan to regulate carbon pollution from power plants. A part of this process, legislators and Governor Northam are interested in joining a regional carbon market — the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative — in order to invest the money raised from selling carbon credits back into the Commonwealth. During this session, you will learn what the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative is, what the differences are between linking to and officially joining the program, and innovative ways other states are using the funds from their carbon markets to invest in clean energy solutions. Panelists include:

- Harrison Wallace — Virginia Director, Chesapeake Climate Action Network (Moderator)
- Tony DePrima — Executive Director, Delaware Sustainable Energy Utility
- Bert Hunter — Executive Vice President & Chief Investment Officer, Connecticut Green Bank
- Peter Iwanowicz — Executive Director, Environmental Advocates of New York

10:25 – 11:40 p.m. | Panel: Achieving Safe and Responsible Closure of Legacy Coal Ash Ponds — Dogwood Room

Virginia is in the second year of a moratorium on permanently closing four Dominion-owned coal ash storage facilities. VCN Network Partners and the public have been working hard to ensure the closure of these outdated facilities is done properly, meaning toxic waste will no longer be leaching into our streams, groundwater, and drinking water sources. One of the most promising solutions is to recycle the ash and use it in beneficial products, such as cement. During this panel, you will get an in-depth understanding of recycling coal ash, as well as the political and economic benefits this viable industry could have here in Virginia. Panelists include:

- Mary-Stuart Torbeck — Senior Organizer, Virginia Chapter Sierra Club (Moderator)
- Delegate Jennifer Carroll Foy — Virginia House of Delegates
- Hank Keiper, P.E. — Mid-Atlantic Area Manager, Southeastern Fly Ash Company
- Jack Kowalski — Marketing / Quality Assurance, Branscome Inc.

11:55 a.m. – 1:10 p.m. | Lunch + Keynote Panel — *Matoka Room*

Keynote Panel: Federal Rollbacks

Almost two years into the Trump Administration, we will use this session to review rollbacks at the federal level, discuss how organizations are fighting back against the current administration, and learn about the greatest opportunities for individuals and organizations to help protect our nation's core environmental laws. Panelists will specifically discuss funding for programs like the Chesapeake Bay Program, rollbacks to the Clean Air Act and Clean Water Act, and attempts to expand offshore drilling.

- Nancy Stoner — Executive Director of Potomac Riverkeeper Network; previously served under President Obama as the Acting Assistant Administrator for the U.S. EPA's Office of Water (Moderator)
- Sarah Francisco — Virginia Director, Southern Environmental Law Center
- Margie Alt — Environmental Campaigner & Strategist, Climate Action Campaign
- Corey Solow — Legislative Aide for Congressman Donald McEachin
- Laura Daniel Davis — Vice President for Conservation Strategy, National Wildlife Federation

1:20 – 2:35 p.m. | Panel: Addressing Sea Level Rise & Our Changing Climate — *Matoka Room*

Sea level rise is an unavoidable problem that Virginians have already had to begin dealing with. Over 150,000 Virginian citizens are at risk of coastal flooding and another 250,000 are at risk of inland flooding. With new problems arising each year, Virginia's current infrastructure is falling short of dealing with the entire problem. This session will address questions about Virginia's coastal future and consider the need for significant interaction between communities, cities, universities, and government in order to mitigate the problems arising. Panelists include:

- Senator Lynwood Lewis — Virginia Senate, District 6 (Moderator)
- Elizabeth Andrews — Director, William and Mary Law School's Virginia Coastal Policy Center
- Carl Hershner — Director, Center for Coastal Resources Management at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science
- Michelle Covi — Assistant Professor in the Ocean, Earth and Atmospheric Sciences Department, Old Dominion University

CHOOSE ONE

1:20 – 2:35 p.m. | Discussion: Balancing Smart Land Use with Large-Scale Solar Development — *Dogwood Room*

In order to tackle climate change, cities, counties, and towns across Virginia are looking at permit applications for large-scale utility solar projects. While we need to invest in more clean energy to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels, we must also protect our rural landscapes and farmland. Join a discussion with members of the land use and energy workgroups to discuss best practices, challenges, and ways the conservation community can work together on this important issue.

- Will Cleveland — Staff Attorney, Southern Environmental Law Center
- Chris Miller — President, Piedmont Environmental Council

2:45 – 4:00 p.m. | Panel: A Look into Virginia's Diverse and Growing Opposition to Pipelines — *Matoka Room*

As proposed, two enormous fracked-gas pipeline projects — the Atlantic Coast and Mountain Valley pipelines — would cross more than one thousand streams and hundreds of miles of Virginia's open spaces. Construction of the Mountain Valley pipeline is underway and we're already seeing the devastating impacts this project is having on our landscapes and waterways. In response to these destructive proposals, a diverse coalition has formed to protect Virginia's communities. This panel will give an update on the two pipelines and explore the various approaches of opposition (including legislative, legal, and grassroots) to the current and future threat of pipelines in Virginia. Panelists include:

- Lara Mack — Virginia Field Organizer, Appalachian Voices (Moderator)
- Delegate Sam Rasoul — Virginia House of Delegates (represents a district in the path of the Mountain Valley Pipeline)
- Ben Luckett — Staff Attorney, Appalachian Mountain Advocates
- Red Terry — Mountain Valley Pipeline Tree-Sitter
- Ivan Frishberg — First Vice President, Sustainability Banking, Amalgamated Bank

CHOOSE ONE

2:45 – 4:00 p.m. | Panel: Breaking Down Barriers to Clean Energy for Individuals and Communities — *Dogwood Room*

Local governments, residents, and businesses want more solar energy in their communities; however, Virginia law lacks incentives for customer-sited, distributed solar. In this session, panelists will discuss the challenges of getting small scale and rooftop solar in Virginia. Once the challenges are identified, panelists will focus on solutions that have worked in Virginia's communities while taking a deeper look at opportunities for policy change in Virginia.

- Will Cleveland — Staff Attorney, Southern Environmental Law Center (Moderator)
- Delegate Alfonso Lopez — Virginia House of Delegates, District 49
- Devin Welch — Vice President of Business Development, Sun Tribe Solar
- Aaron Sutch — Program Director, Solar United Neighbors of Virginia

4:00 p.m. | Closing remarks



Virginia Conservation Network combines the voices of environmental organizations across Virginia to conserve our Commonwealth's natural resources and ensure its future prosperity.

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